

Commitments to the State Home and
School, Rhode Island January 1, 1943
to June 30, 1943

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COMMITMENTS TO THE STATE HOME AND SCHOOL, RHODE ISLAND
JANUARY 1, 1943 TO JUNE 30, 1943

A Thesis

Submitted by

James Henry Reilly

(A.B., Providence College, 1941)

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Science in Social Service

1944

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to make an analysis of the children committed to the State Home and School from January 1, 1943 to June 30, 1943. An attempt will be made to trace the development of the child placing program from the traditional institutional commitment until minority, to modern coordinated institutional and foster home placement policy. To accomplish this, annual reports and committee reports will be cited, as well as, literature that has been published by people who have been acquainted with the situation through the years.

From observation it seems that the State Home and School, the institution to which all dependent and neglected children are committed, is striving in many respects to function as a study home and a home for temporary placement of children who have been removed from the community because of circumstances. The children arrive at the institution after commitment by the court and remain there until foster home or other institutional placement can be undertaken. This occurs after sufficient understanding of the child's personality and behavior have been obtained in order that the correct type of placement will be provided.

In regard to the function of the institution, the

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For convenience it seems that the State Home and School the institution to which all dependent and neglected children are committed, is referred to in many reports as the institution as a study home and a home for temporary placement of children who have been removed from the community because of circumstances. The children arrive at the institution after removal from the street and remain there until foster care or other institutional placement can be undertaken. This course after removal is representative of the child's removal from the street and has been obtained in other that the correct type of placement will be provided. In regard to the function of the institution, the

question has been raised many times as to the type of children which it should receive. Juvenile Court judges frequently commit predelinquent and wayward children to the institution, reasoning that the child's problem is a result of his environment, therefore removal to a better environment should bring about a change for the better in behavior. Also, there are cases of children under ten years of age who have been involved in wayward and delinquent behavior such as fire setting, stealing and truancy, whom the judge commits on the basis of age rather than on the basis of behavior. The institution, in its attempt to act as a stopping-off place for normal children, does not seem to be able to cope with the serious wayward and delinquent cases of very young children. This is due, primarily, to lack of proper personnel and lack of adequate facilities for this type of child.

There may be ascertained also, the number of children who are committed on the grounds of dependency, yet the children have been recipients of assistance under the federal Aid to Dependent Children Program but have for some reason been unable to survive on the Aid to Dependent Children allotment.

The number of illegitimate babies committed right after birth will be investigated as well as the rate of commitments for the various races.

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ren which is being received. It would be desirable to have the
parent's consent to the placement and to the child's transfer to the
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vironment should there be a change for the better in
behavior. Also, there are cases of children under ten years
of age who have been involved in wayward and delinquent be-
havior such as fire setting, stealing and truancy, when the
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who are admitted on the grounds of dependency, and the
children have been victims of neglect under the
General Act for dependent children. But have for some
reason been unable to receive on the Act for dependent child-
ren.

The number of illegitimate babies born each year after
birth will be investigated as well as the rate of coun-
seling for the various cases.

There will be an attempt made to discover the effect that increased employment, with women going into industry, has had on commitments. This will also be attempted in cases where one member of the family has been inducted into the armed services.

In order to obtain this information cases which were committed to the State Home and School in the period from January 1, 1943 to June 30, 1943 will be consulted. A large detailed schedule will be used in order to acquire specific information on each case.

The scope of the study will encompass all children committed to the State Home and School by any of the twelve Probate Courts in the State, from January 1, 1943 to and including June 30, 1943.

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CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STATE HOME AND SCHOOL AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD PLACING PROGRAM

In Rhode Island the State Home and School is the official title of the home for dependent and neglected children which is beautifully situated on top of a hill on Mount Pleasant Avenue in Providence. It is a rather large children's institution occupying 75 acres of land. Most of this land was used for farming years ago but this has now stopped because of the labor shortage.

The institution proper consists of eight cottages. A & B cottage for infants and pre school children, C cottage for personnel, D cottage for girls, E cottage for girls, F cottage, the hospital and admittance cottage, G cottage for older boys, I cottage for pre adolescent boys and J cottage for pre adolescent boys. There is a school building which has only one classroom. The remainder of the building is used for storage and for the Child Welfare Services offices. On the second floor there is a large room which is used for religious services and for group entertainment. There is a laundry and boiler room in a separate building. Annexed to the Administrator's home are the offices of the State Home and School, the offices of the Children's Bureau and on the other end of

of the building is the kitchen and the officer's dining room. This in brief is the plan of the institution. The buildings are old and in bad repair and a movement is underway to erect another institution on a smaller scale. Consequently it is very important that an analysis of the type of child in residence there be made.

On April 29, 1884, an "Act to Establish a State Home and School" was passed by the Legislature¹. The purpose of the act was to provide for children, under the age of sixteen (the age limit was later changed to include girls up to 21 years and boys up to 18 years), who were dependent or neglected, who were in a suitable condition of mind and body to be instructed, and who were not vicious or criminal.

Prior to the passage of this act dependent children were placed on poor farms or in public work houses, along with the adult poor, sick and insane. From these work houses the children were bound out to private families to work in return for food and shelter. In 1850, the famous Hazard report² disclosed these conditions and went on to recommend that constructive action be taken to eradicate them. From 1869 to 1883 the reports of the State Board of Charities and Correction emphasized the matter but no action was

¹ Acts and Resolves of General Assembly, Jan. 1884, Ch. 418, sec. 4

² Thomas P. Hazard, Report on Poor and Insane in Rhode Island, made to General Assembly, January 1851

forthcoming.

Finally as a consequence of public concern the act was passed by the legislature. Under this act the Board of Education was given control of the institution and also received the right to place and supervise children in foster homes.³ The institution was established on Smith Street on the site of a former farm with forty-two acres of land, two cottages and a barn.⁴

The institution was opened in 1885. As a result of an investigation of the General Assembly⁵, a Board of Control of the State Home and School was established⁶, replacing the Board of Education in supervising the institution. This Board was replaced, in 1917, by the State Penal and Charitable Commission, whose title was later changed to the State Public Welfare Commission.⁷ Later in 1939 this commission was replaced by the Department of Social Welfare.

Although it had previously been practised by Rhode Island Children's Friend Society, placement of children in foster homes was begun under state auspices in 1886. The children were placed in homes recommended by the clergy with the approval of the Secretary of the Board. From 1886 to 1891, 107 children were placed.⁸

³ Acts & Resolves of the General Assembly, January 1851

⁴ Henry J. Creapeau, A History of Child Welfare Planning Ch. III, p. 64

⁵ Report of the Joint Special Committee to Investigate the management of the State Home and School, 1890

⁶ Acts and Resolves of the General Assembly, Jan. 1884

⁷ Public Laws, February 1939, Ch. 660, sec. 80

⁸ 22nd Annual Report of Board of Ed. 1891, p. 101

However, the program in child placing was slow in developing and placement of older boys was accomplished by indenture or apprenticeship. After several investigations, a foster home department was created in 1911.⁹ Miss E. P.

Durham of the Boston Children's Aid Society was appointed visitor. Under this program better progress was made and fewer children were returned from the foster homes because of the better supervision which resulted.

In 1918, under the State Penal and Charitable Commission, the State Home and School began to assume the functions of a temporary detention home. There was a sharp increase in the placement of children. However, the institution was becoming a permanent home for the physically and mentally deficient who could not be placed out.¹⁰

On July 9, 1926, the Children's Bureau was created under Miss Anna I. Griffith. This was a separate department. Its purpose was to undertake child placing, and to supervise boarding homes for infants, day nurseries and maternity hospitals, and private child caring and child placing agencies. The bureau was also responsible for the investigation of prospective adoptive homes and reporting on them to the courts.¹¹

⁹ Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Control of State Home and School, December 14, 1911

¹⁰ Annual Reports of State Penal and Charitable Commission 1922, 1923, 1924

¹¹ Report Children's Law Commission 1926, p. 11

TABLE #1

State Home and School population at the end of year and placements during the year for the years from 1926 to 1943:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>POPULATION</u>	<u>PLACEMENTS</u>
1926	231	203
1927	258	140
1928	292	199
1929	250	238
1930	240	129
1931	275	274
1932	248	254
1933	315	174
1934	309	196
1935	329	180
1936	266	200
1937	308	175
1938	350	207
1939	313	230
1940	192	299
1941	184	213
1942	147	235
1943	109	332

This bureau was to cooperate with the State Home and School. However because the two were separate and distinct organizations, the achievements, with the lack of united effort, were limited. The children's bureau placed a greater number of children than ever before, but the State Home and School was in a bad plight due to overcrowding.

One can easily visualize the conditions which existed and can imagine the amount of care individual children could have received when the capacity of the institution was 220. The institution's population was not below this figure for any year from 1926 to 1939. (See Table I)

In 1942, the Division of Children's Services was created under the Department of Social Welfare with Miss Anna I. Griffith as Administrator. It consisted of the State Home and School, the Children's Bureau, and the Child Welfare Services Division which was created in 1938 under the federal Social Security Program. As head of this new division, the administrator had control of the three departments and consequently the resources of any unit were the resources of the entire division likewise were the problems of each unit. Miss Kate Bullock in a paper given at the National Conference of Social Work in Buffalo, New York in 1939, said:

Any continuance of the controversy that has existed concerning the advantages of foster home care over foster institutional care and vice versa would cease to exist if a good case work program were accepted by every child caring institution. Foster home care

should be supplementary to foster institutional care and both should be interchangeable to meet individual needs.¹²

Immediately placements increased and the population of the institution declined to the lowest since 1918 in spite of increased commitments. The institution began again to assume the role of a temporary detention home.

Today the shortage of foster homes is creating a problem. But more important is the type of child that is being committed. All too often the children are borderline in mentality and are not capable of adjusting in a foster home. On this point, the report of the Ohio Committee on Children's Institutions says,

Unless institutions for dependent children have restrictions concerning the brightness level of those accepted by them, probably during recent years the staff of each has found within their populations larger proportions than formerly of dullards and high grade defectives. Speaking in terms of averages, dependents have been found to be endowed by birth with inferior-average intelligence.¹³

In like manner the child who is a behavior problem is often committed to the State Home and School because the judge feels that a change in environment will change the boy.

As the institution has no custodial facilities - there is no night supervision and there are no fences - it is

¹² Child Welfare League of America, Inc., Continuity of Case Work Service, New York 1939

¹³ Ohio Committee on Children's Institutions, Principles of Child Care in Institutions, Ch. XVI, p. 141, 1941

unable to cope with the situation. There are no facilities other than the one classroom for training. The Ohio Commission has pointed out that "a retarded child cannot be educated but he can be trained." 14

There are twelve district courts in the State, which courts hear juvenile cases once each week. Each judge has a different point of view and there is no control over the type of child that is being committed. In the commitments for the six month period under study in the next section, there are cases which are known to the police department for fire setting, truancy, running away, stealing, and for predelinquent and pre wayward behavior. This type of child cannot benefit from immediate foster home placement even if such were available. The State Home and School does not have the physical plant nor the staff to cope with the problem. The Committee on Institutions for Children of the Welfare Council of New York City says:

The proportion of three to six children per staff member (employees whose duties bring them into direct training relationship with the children) in institutions for dependent and delinquent children is usually adequate from a quantitative point of view. 15

The present ratio of children, in the institution, to employees directly responsible for their care is 12 to 1.

14 Ibid, p. 153

15 Welfare Council of New York City, Albany 1935, An Outline of Practices and Aims for Children's Institutions, Ch. II, p. 15

unable to keep him and his children. There are no facilities

other than the one at school for children. The child

Commission has indicated that there is no school which cannot

be situated but he has been advised that

There are no facilities provided in the State, which

cannot meet the child's needs once each week. Each child has

a different point of view and there is no standard over the

type of child that is being committed. In the community

for the six month period under study is the next section.

There are cases which are known to the police department

for the section, including, including, including, and for

protection and the general behavior. This type of child

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even when available. The State Department and School does not

have the physical plant for the child to keep with the

problem. The Committee on Institutions for Children of the

Welfare Council of New York City says

The protection of cases in the child's pay staff

which involves some other than the child

direct training and supervision (with the child)

in institutions for treatment and adjustment of the

can be made by the child's own point of

view.

The present state of affairs, in the institution, is an

issue directly responsible for their care in the State.

in 1914, p. 155

is Welfare Council of New York City, Albany 1925.

in Bureau of Statistics and New York City's Institute

Albany, N. Y. 1925

CHAPTER III

THE CASES

There were 109 commitments from January 1, 1943 to June 30, 1943. Five cases have been selected by the writer for study as typical of the principal classes of children committed. The writer has been familiar with the reasons for commitment of these children. They include the case of two brothers who have been a danger to the community because of fire setting, a case of a retarded baby born to an unmarried mother who is a patient at the Exeter School for the feebleminded, the case of a sex delinquent girl most of whose family has exhibited the same behavior, the case of the father who has entered the armed services and whose child is committed to the care of the state and the case of a family that is receiving Aid to Dependent Children but who, nevertheless, have been committed to the State Institution as dependent children.

CASE #I

This is the case of George, age 7, and his brother John, age 5. Mother died after the birth of the second boy and father remarried. The step-mother was, at one time, a patient at the State Hospital for Mental Diseases. The father has a record of eight different jail sentences.

The family had been known to the Society for the Pre-

vention of Cruelty to Children for a long time. Mother and father had both contacted the Society on many occasions because they could not get along with one another and because each felt that the other was abusing the children. The children were placed in foster homes on two occasions but parents were not satisfied and removed them from the foster homes.

Father works in a defense plant earning \$50.00 per week as a laborer. There was much drinking and fighting in the home.

Both boys were stealing in the community and had set several large fires causing much damage. The people in the community were insisting that the family be removed.

On a Stanford Binet test, the older boy, George had an I. Q. of 74 and was considered to be functioning at a subnormal level of intelligence. His responses were irrelevant and he spoke as though he was dreaming. He was unable to concentrate for more than a few seconds at a time and told of setting fires in order "to watch the excitement". He had a speech defect and was in the kindergarten at school. The younger brother, John, had an I. Q. of 63. He was hyperactive and talked constantly and irrelevantly. George had a habit of soiling and was rejected by his father and mother. He too acknowledged his fondness for stealing and fire setting. Neither boy was found to be good material for foster home placement.

version of things by Chinese for a long time. Father and
 father had some children and they tried to study Chinese
 because they could not get along with one another in the
 country and they had the same way of thinking. The children
 The children were placed in Western homes on the occasion
 but parents were not satisfied and removed them from the
 Western homes.
 Father was in a defense of the country \$20.00 per
 week in a hospital. There was some trouble in the hospital
 in the home.
 This boy was working in the community and had not yet
 several years since then, some money. The people in the
 community were still living like the family he was born.
 On a certain night, the oldest boy, George, had
 an I. Q. of 40 and was considered to be functioning as a
 subnormal level of intelligence. His response was
 irrelevant and he spoke no words he was intelligent. He was
 unable to communicate for more than a few words at a
 time and told of seeing him in order to make the ex-
 ation. He had a speech defect and was in the school
 system at the time. The younger brother, John, had an I. Q.
 of 30. He had some social and some language and
 his behavior. He had a basis of social and was re-
 spected by the family and others. He was considered his
 language for social and his behavior. He had not yet
 found as a good example for these boys.

At the time of the boy's commitment father was sentenced to jail for sexually attacking a four year old child.

Step-mother refused to take responsibility for the children and so they were committed to the State Home and School for minority.

The judge felt that these boys were too young to be placed in a training school. They are not normal children and are a menace to the institution. There is no supervision at night and inadequate supervision during the day.

Children of this type are frequently committed to the institution and such children should not be in a home for dependent and neglected children. They are defective children in need of custodial care and constitute a major problem because of the dangerous nature of their behavior.

CASE #II

This is the case of Frederick who is eight months old. His mother, age 30, was committed to the Oaklawn Training School for Girls at the age of 16 because she, along with other girls, had been selling themselves for indecent activity in taxicabs. Mother was found to have an I. Q. of 47. She was released on attaining her majority and thereafter had two illegitimate babies who had been committed to the care of the State. She was finally committed to the Exeter School for the feeble-minded and gave birth to Frederick at the Exeter Institution. The baby

was a difficult feeding problem and appeared to be retarded in every way. He had a peculiarly shaped head, was unable to sit up at one year, did not sleep well, caused vomiting by pushing his hand down his throat, so that his hands had to be restrained. He did not talk, and although he was completely unamenable to training, he was committed to the State Home and School for minority as a dependent child. As the Exeter School does not accept children under five years of age, he must remain at the institution mixed in with a large group of normal babies.

There are several such infants now at the institution. Their care has created a major problem, because of the attention they need as well as because of the fact that there is no way to separate them from the normal children.

CASE #III

This is the case of a 14 year old girl Muriel who lived with a married sister but has run away many times. Her father is an alcoholic and has deserted. Her mother is dead. She has four older brothers and four older sisters.

The whereabouts of the oldest brother is unknown. The next older brother is married to a woman who had two children by him before marriage. Another brother, whose whereabouts is unknown has a history of having had sex relations with his sisters. The address of the next brother is unknown but he too has a history of sex relations with his sisters. An older sister is a professional prostitute and

has one illegitimate child. Another sister ran away from the Oaklawn Training School for Girls, and has never been located. The other sister has just had an illegitimate child and is about to marry and one sister is happily married and bringing up a family. This is the home in which Muriel lived.

This girl, Muriel, has also been involved in sex delinquency. She was apprehended by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the girl was committed to the State Home and School.

This girl is in need of restriction and is a serious problem to the institution because of her running away and sex difficulties. It might be added that the girl described was given understanding care and a year later was placed in a foster home in which she is adjusting very well.

This type of child frequently comes to the institution and is a difficult problem because the child is placed with other children who are just approaching adolescence. Because of her sex experience she can be a serious threat to the entire cottage. There is also many run away children committed. There are no fences at the institution and should the child continue to run away there is a possibility of this behavior passing to many other children who are stirred up by this child's running away.

CASE #IV

This is the case of the Brown family. There are five

There are two distinct kinds. Another class is the
the Social Training School for Girls, and the next is
the Social Training School for Boys. The other class has been an institution
established to train the young men and women in the
various and extensive as a family. This is the same as
which I have lived.
This class, which, has also been involved in the
delinquency. It was represented by the Society for the
Prevention of Delinquency in California and the Girl and Boy
clubs of the State House and Capitol.

This kind is the kind of tuberculosis and is a serious
problem to the institution because of the training they are
and discipline. It might be stated that the girl branch
and give the same training and a good future.
In a house where the child is brought very well.

This type of child frequently comes to the institution
and is a difficult problem because the child is placed
with other children who are in the same condition and
because of the same condition and a bad influence that
is the entire cause. There is also the fact that
the child is placed in the institution.
and through the child's conduct in the institution is a
question of this behavior which is very serious and
who are trained in the child's home.

Class II

This is the case of the Social Training School for Girls and the

children. The father, who has a legal separation, has moved away from the State and his whereabouts is unknown. The family have been recipients of Aid to Dependent Children for two years. Under this program the family was able to move to a better home and to furnish their home decently. However the mother has not managed the home well and it is untidy. Neither is she able to give the children proper care or to provide proper training. She herself has acknowledged that she cannot cope with the children. The case was taken to the District Court and the children were committed as dependent children.

After nearly a year's residence in the institution the children, having progressed very well, were gradually placed back with the mother who was given close supervision by the Children's Bureau. The family was restored to Aid to Dependent Children and the case has been turned back to that department.

There were several cases committed which were receiving Aid to Dependent Children. These are discussed in the Statistical Study and in the Conclusions.

CASE #V

This is the case of a family of five children. The father was drafted into the armed forces and the children were left with the mother. Later two of the children were placed with relatives. The mother had requested the Draft Board to select him because he was alcoholic and was not

supporting the children.

After the father was drafted the home became filthy, the mother began to sell the furniture, was frequently away from the home at night so that the children were left alone. Finally because of complaints of neighbors, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children took the case to court and the children were committed as neglected.

This type of commitment has increased each month and at present there are several families of children in the institution because of the war situation. In these instances the father has been inducted into the armed forces and the mother has not taken adequate care of the children so that it was necessary to commit them to the care of the State.

CHAPTER IV

STATISTICAL STUDY

The 109 cases which were studied disclosed a commitment of 100 white children and 9 colored children. The proportion of colored children committed is not large but the placement of colored children has been rather slow so that there are now 28 colored children in the institution.

The residence of the families was scattered throughout the state but the vast majority of commitments came from urban areas. (See Chart I, page 20) There were only 12 commitments from what might be considered as rural areas. The city of Providence led in commitments with 49, the city of Newport was next with 15, and the city of Pawtucket followed with 13. The city of Cranston was next with 10. These were illegitimate babies which were born at the State Infirmary and committed directly from that institution.

In recent years there has been an increase in commitments from towns who formerly were reluctant to commit children. This can probably be attributed to the fact that in 1942 an act was passed by the legislature relieving the towns from paying the State for the support of children committed from the towns.¹

¹ Public Laws 1942, Ch. 1212, Article 3, sec. 1

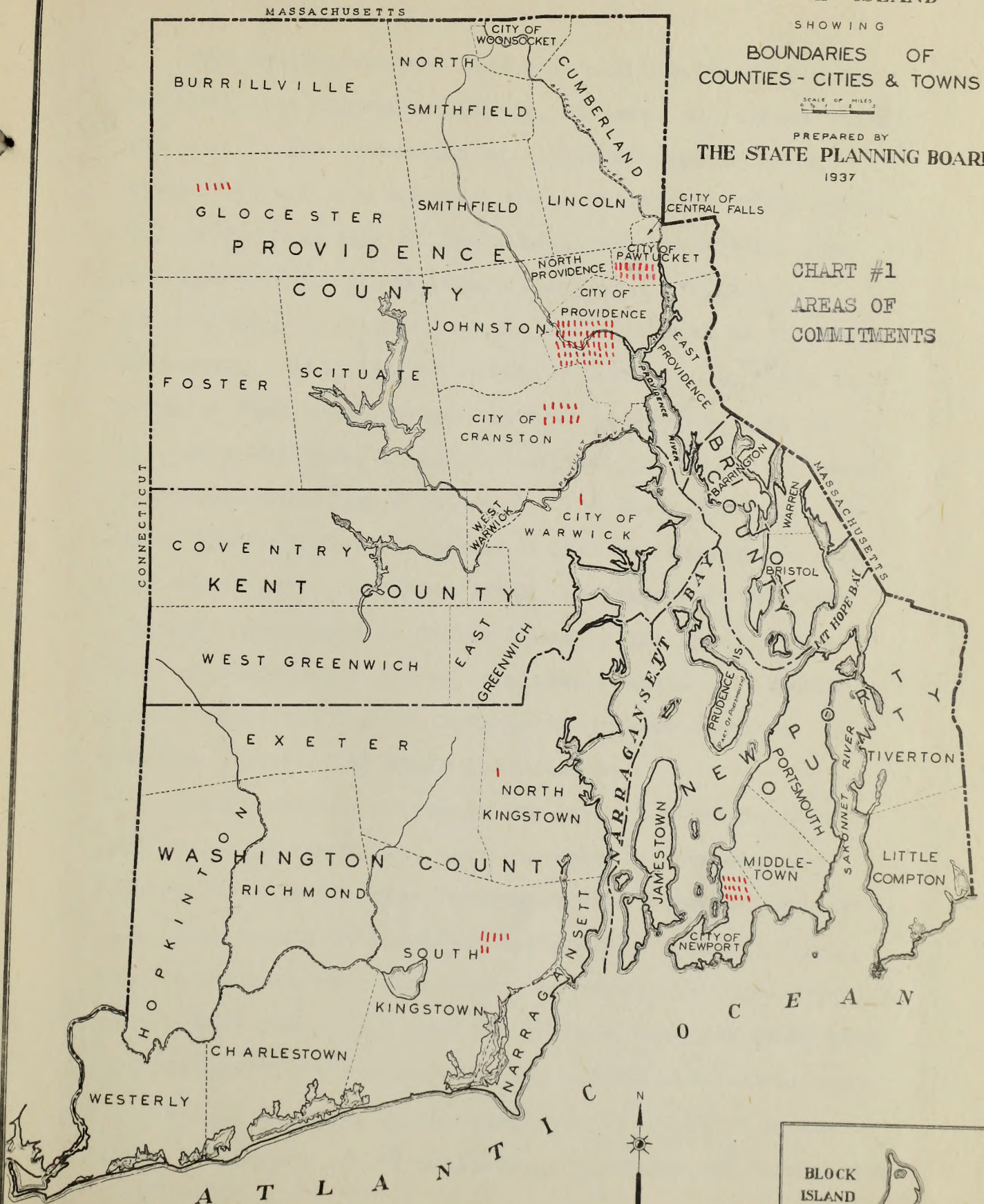
MAP OF
THE STATE OF
RHODE ISLAND

SHOWING
BOUNDARIES OF
COUNTIES - CITIES & TOWNS

SCALE OF MILES
0 1 2

PREPARED BY
THE STATE PLANNING BOARD
1937

CHART #1
AREAS OF
COMMITMENTS



BLOCK
ISLAND

NEW
SHOREHAM

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children committed the most children, it being the agency whose function is the protection of children throughout the state. Seventy-one children were committed by this agency during the last half of the fiscal year 1942-1943. The Children's Bureau committed 11 children during this period, the illegitimate babies who were born at the State Infirmary. Child Welfare Services Division committed 12 children from rural areas, who were neglected. Aid to Dependent Children, a division of the Department of Public Assistance committed 9 children. The Rhode Island Children's Friend Society committed 3 children during the period under study. These children were dependent children who had been placed in foster homes by the agency. The Catholic Charitable Bureau committed 2 children. Exeter School committed 1 child born to an unmarried mother who was a patient at their institution.

Other agencies active at the time of commitment but not acting as committing agencies were too numerous and scattered to be of value for statistical purposes. However, Aid to Dependent Children was active on 17 cases. This figure includes only those cases in which they were actually giving assistance. It does not include cases on which they had been previously active but had discontinued assistance.

The 12 District Courts committed 61 children on the basis of neglect and 48 children on the basis of dependency,

The laws pertaining to the commitment of children to the State define neglect and dependency in the following manner:

The term 'dependent' for the purposes of this chapter shall mean and include any child under eighteen years of age whose parents, for good cause, desire to be relieved of his care and custody; or who is without a parent or lawful guardian able to adequately provide for his support, training and education and is unable to maintain himself by lawful employment; or who is supported in a poor-house or otherwise dependent on the public for support.²

The term 'neglected' for the purposes of this chapter shall mean and include any child under eighteen years of age who has been abandoned by both parents or if one parent is dead, by the survivor, or by the person having the custody or control of said child; or who is an habitual sufferer for want of food or clothes by reason of the wrongful neglect of the parent or person having the custody or control of such child; or who is in any manner being used for wanton, cruel or improper purposes; or who is compelled to do wanton and wrongful acts; or whose home is a resort for lewd, wanton, drunken or dissolute persons or whose home, by reason of neglect, cruelty, drunkenness, or depravity on the part of the parent or person having the custody or control of such child is an unfit place for such child to live in; or whose health and life are endangered by the occupation in which he is engaged or who is in manner wrongfully induced, constrained, or allowed by such parent or other person having the custody or control of such child, to beg, steal, or in any manner wrongfully impose upon others for the benefit of such child, or of the parent or other person having the custody or control of such child or who is neglected and has not proper care and oversight; or whose parents, parent or guardian, having given the custody of such child to an individual, association or corporation under an agreement to pay for the support, care and education of such child, shall neglect or refuse to pay the reasonable charges therefor or whose parents or other person having the custody or control of such child

² Public Laws of Rhode Island 1928, Ch. 1226, p.4, sec.1

neglect or refuse when able to do so, to provide medical, surgical or other remedial care necessary for his health or well being.³

Frequently rather than to apply the laws for waywardness and delinquency and to avoid sending the child to Sockanosset Training School for Boys or the Oaklawn Training School for Girls (thereby incurring a "record" for the child) the judge commits him to the State Home and School as neglected. This is the most serious type of commitment to the State Home and School, as it is not equipped to give these children care and these children usually are not good foster home material. A rather serious problem is created through the commitment of feebleminded children to the institution, the court being unaware of the child's mentality at the time of commitment. Then it becomes the difficult task of the State Home and School to take the child back to court and have him committed to Exeter School. This method is not always successful. So that in addition to borderline cases, feebleminded children are usually in residence. It is seldom that the Exeter School for the feebleminded will accept children under 70 I.Q. on the Stanford Binet test and it is always necessary to get two doctors to testify in court before commitment can be effected. This in itself is a problem in these war times when doctors are so busy.

As to economic status of the families all were

³ Ibid

either of Dependent, Marginal or Comfortable means, but not beyond. Eighty-six families were dependent circumstances, 5 were in marginal circumstances and 18 were comfortably situated because of war work and high salaries.

The marital status of the parents was scattered. Thirty-six were unmarried; 24 were married and living together; in 9 instances the marriage was intact, but the parents were not living together; 7 were in the armed forces and 2 were in institutions; in 1 case the parents were divorced; in 1 case the father was dead, in 6 cases the mother was dead; in 32 cases the parents were separated and not living together. It was disclosed from the schedules that in 15 cases one of the parents had been in Exeter School for the feeble-minded. The State Infirmary had sheltered 13. Eleven had been in the State Prison and 8 had been in the State Hospital for Mental Diseases. In 7 cases a father had been at the Sockanosset Training School for Boys. Three mothers had been at the Oaklawn Training School for Girls and 4 had been at the Women's Reformatory. In all, 61 parents had been committed to State Institutions previously to their children being committed. This is illustrated in TABLE # II.

TABLE #II
THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES PREVIOUSLY COMMITTED OR CARED FOR
BY STATE INSTITUTIONS

Institution	Number of Families
Exeter School	15
State Infirmary	13
State Prison	11
State Hospital for Mental Diseases	8
Sockanosset School	7
Oaklawn School	3
Women's Reformatory	4
Total	<u>61</u>

The occupations of the fathers of these families were not given in every record and neither were their salaries. However it was found that 5 fathers were in the Army and that 3 fathers were in the Navy. It was also found that 17 mothers were working and because of this situation their children were neglected.

In most cases the parents were described as unstable and irresponsible. Nineteen were noted as definitely alcoholic. Forty-two were sex delinquents. In a great many cases there was marital friction and a lack of interest in the family.

The children who were committed were closely divided as to sex, 55 were boys, 54 girls, 46 were of school age.

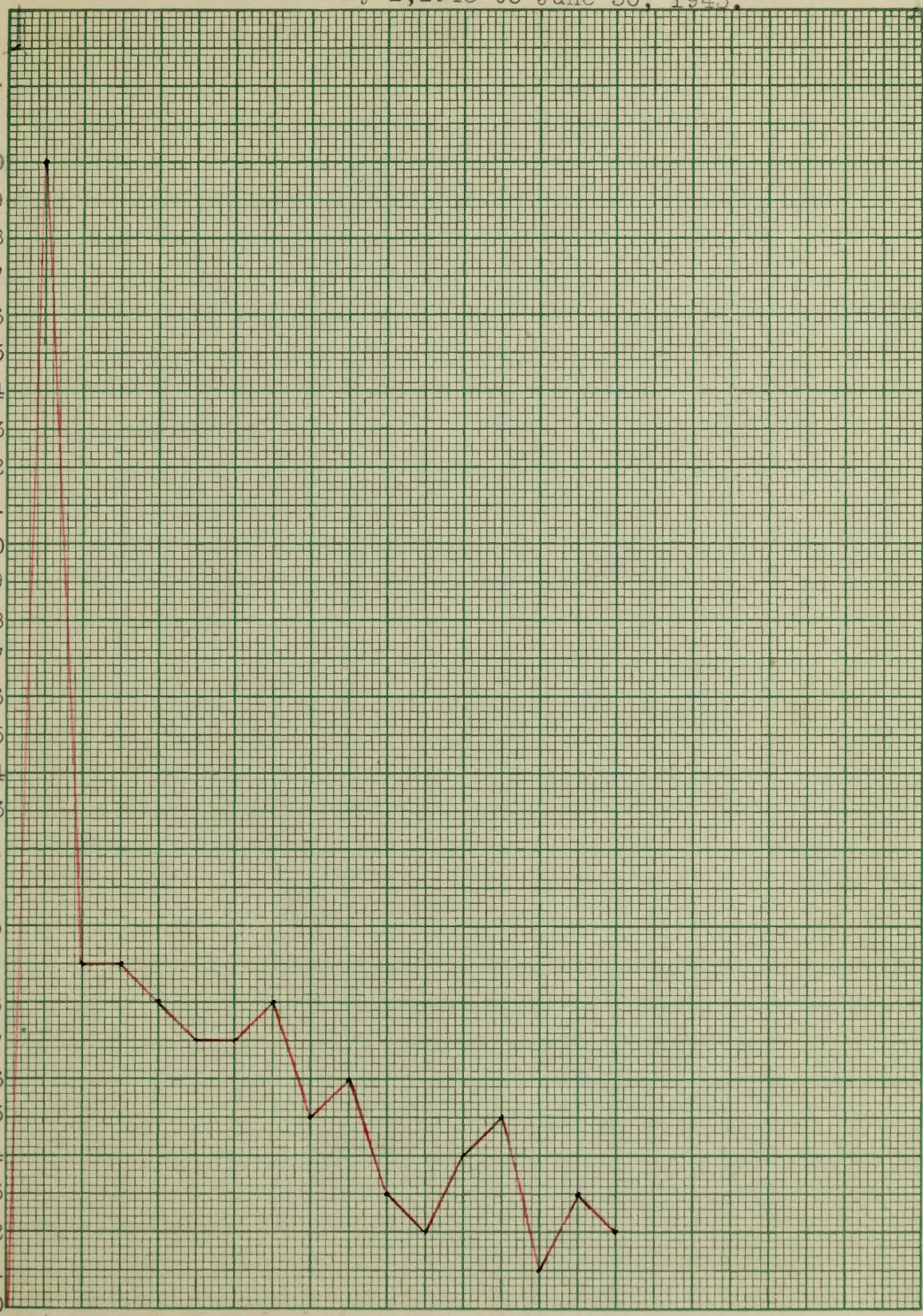
The distribution is illustrated in Chart #2. Thirty children committed during this six month period were one

AGES OF CHILDREN COMMITTED
From January 1, 1943 to June 30, 1943.

Chart 2.

No.

30
29
28
27
26
25
24
23
22
21
20
19
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0



Ages 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

22

22

22

22

year of age or less. This age group is outstanding in proportion to the other age groups. From the chart it can also be seen that children in the age range from 1 to 8 are more frequently committed than are older children.

Psychometric examinations were given by the State Department of Psychometric Services to 48 children. The intelligence quotients are shown in TABLE #III. It will be noted that 29 children were of dull borderline, or sub-normal intelligence and that according to table ratings created by E.L. Fletcher, Director, New York State Training School for Boys⁴, and shown in TABLE III, these children come from the lower 21% of the population of our country.

TABLE #III 5

I.Q. CLASSIFICATIONS OF 48 COMMITMENTS

I. Q. Range	Number of children	Classification	Estimated Academic Potentiality	% of Total Population
120-130	0	Superior	College	6%
110-120	0	Above average	High School	15%
90-110	9	Average	Jr. Hgh. Sch.	58%
80-90	12	Dull	7th grade	15%
70-80	14	Borderline	5th grade	5%
Below 70	13	Defective	4th grade	1%

4 E.L. Fletcher Understanding Psychological Tests, Children's Institutions June 1941, Vol. I, No. 11

5 Ibid

The findings on the attitude and behavior of these children in school confirmed the information contained in TABLE #III. It was found that 19 of the children were getting along in school. The remaining 27 were inattentive, slow and unable to learn. As far as could be learned, as the records did not contain much information on the matter, the children had a good relationship with their siblings and playmates. In spite of their poor home conditions it was disclosed that these children were closely attached to their parents. This seems to bear out the fact which is so often seen when a child leaves the institution to work, having attained the proper age, that he will go to his father or mother immediately, in spite of the fact that they have neglected him or have not supported him. For this reason institutional authorities feel that the child should be removed from his home only in extreme cases. All too often the child is removed from a home which is considered a hovel by the social worker but is a palace to the child. This child never accepts the institution and returns to his original environment at the first opportunity.

Anna Freud and Dorothy T. Burlingham, in their book "War and Children", say:⁶

It is difficult to realize that all these improvements in the child's life (being evacuated from a dangerous bombed area in England to a safer area) may dwindle down to nothing when weighed against the fact that it has to leave its family to gain them.

⁶ Anna Freud & Dorothy T. Burlingham International University Press 1944, p. 45, War and Children

The health of all children committed during the six months under investigation was good except for 6 cases of malnutrition and 1 case of rheumatic heart.

The Children's Bureau placed 63 of these children from the State Home and School in foster homes. Eighteen returned to parents and 2 were placed with relatives. Four were committed to Exeter School and 4 babies were placed in St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage. Three children were placed in St Aloysius Home and 1 was committed to Sockanosset School. Fourteen remained at the State Home and School.

On this subject John L. Wilson, Ph.D. Director of the First Children's Center, First National Bank, said:

"With the growing interest in the care of children, and for the pleasure of children, who are now being given the experience of leaving the institution - place in the large child welfare program. Where, many years of low placement problems, the moving from the results of certain experiences to the institutional life, have begun to require institutional objectives and features. Rather than being all care for children who have no life experience their own home."

Journal of Child Psychology and Public Institutions
September 1922, Vol. 12, No. 3

12 - TWO COMES

27 FEB 1949

1 - TWO COMES

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

From the study several findings seem to be indicated.

First, the State Home and School contains such a conglomeration of children that it is unable to render the valuable service that it should or might render as a temporary home.

The Report of the Commission on Public Institutions recommended to Governor J. Howard Mc Grath that "for a long time plan, this Commission recommends that the State Home and School be discontinued". It suggests that a State Juvenile Clinic be established. "This will begin with first-class classification, which will send some to Exeter, others to Sockanosset and Oaklawn, the normally intelligent who present no unusual behavior problems will be placed in adequate foster homes. Thus the present population will be cared for".¹

On this subject Orlo L. Crissey, Ph.D. Director of the Flint Guidance Center, Flint Michigan said:

With the growing interest in the use of family homes for the placement of children, some workers have gone to the extreme of denying the institution a place in the large child welfare program. Others, fully aware of home placement problems, and having seen the results of certain adjustments to institutional like, have begun to evaluate institutional objectives and procedures. Rather than saying all care for children who have to live away from their own homes

¹ Report of State Commission on Public Institutions
December 1, 1943, Ch.IX, p. 62

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS

From the study several findings need to be indicated. First, the State Home and School Commission, even a commission of children that it is unable to render the valuable service that it should or might render as a temporary home.

The Report of the Commission on Public Institutions recommended to Governor J. Howard McOmmer that for a long time past, this Commission recommended that the State Home and School be discontinued. It suggests that a State Juvenile Clinic be established. "This will begin with three classes classification, which will need some to foster, others to encourage and others, the naturally intelligent who present no unusual behavior problems will be placed in appropriate foster homes. Thus the present population will be cared for."

On this subject Otto L. Gurnsey, Jr., Director of the Child Guidance Center, Flint Michigan said:

With the growing interest in the use of family homes for the placement of children, some workers have gone to the extreme of denying the institution a place in the large child welfare program. Others, fully aware of some placement problems, and having seen the results of certain adjustments to institutional life, have begun to evaluate institutional objectives and methods. Rather than expel all care for children who have to live away from their own homes

I Report of State Commission on Public Institutions
December 1, 1943, Ch. II, p. 28

should be given in placement homes, or that all should be given in institutions, a new philosophy of service has been evolved. In this revised viewpoint the institution takes its place in the community as one of the tools or resources available for use of a highly skilled therapeutic service. Thus whether or not the institution would be used for a certain child would depend on the child's need, and to the extent to which the program of the institution would be of value to his development and adjustment. Such a view, of course, implies numerous adaptations of present institutional practices.²

It is unquestioned that the State Home and School is no longer adequate, but the problem of replacement is a big one.

A second fact that is disclosed from the study is that many of the difficulties of the State Home and School can be traced directly to poor commitment procedures. By this is meant that in many cases the child is committed to the wrong institution.

This problem will be rectified to some extent by the new Juvenile Court which has been created by the 1944 General Assembly and which will begin to function on July 1, 1944. The court will handle all cases of juveniles, thereby relieving the District Courts of this burden. Consequently, the judge will be a specialist in children's problems and will probably make better use of facilities. It is likely to be a great asset to the community. However, Dr. Miriam Van Waters, pioneer in the field of juvenile delinquency said in 1925:

² Orlo Crissey, Ph.D., The Child in the Institution, Child Welfare League of America, New York 1941, p.1

Each community builds up its own concept of Juvenile Court; in proportion to the number of enlightened, educated people of good will in the community, court work is either good or bad. It may be regarded as a panacea for all the ills of childhood or as a branding iron which automatically scorches a stigma on each child who passes its threshold.³

Barnes and Teeters say, " the temper of the times is unquestionably favorable to the process of socialization of our courts, criminal or well or juvenile."⁴

It is likely that the juvenile court will solve the problem of poor commitment procedure.

A third fact disclosed by the study is that the problem of the unmarried mother is a serious one. Thirty-six illegitimate babies were committed. Illegitimacy is a growing problem particularly when many of the children are retarded and have been born to people who have been inmates of state institutions for years, who are on parole and are rather irresponsible.

A fourth and strange fact is that forty-four per cent of the commitments were because of dependency. This condition exists in spite of Federal Aid to Dependent Children and increased employment and high wages.

The fifth conclusion seems to indicate the importance of the question whether the Aid to Dependent Children's program should render relief only or whether it should re-

³ Miriam Van Waters, Youth in Conflict, the New Republic, 1925, p. 149

⁴ H. E. Barnes and L. Teeters New Horizons in Criminology, Prentice Hall Inc. N. Y. 1943, ChXXXVIII, p.929

enforce it with case work service. Several cases were committed which were aided under this program and there is a question whether increased case work service might not have prevented commitment.

Jane M. Hoey, collaborating with Lucille Corbett, states in regard to the Aid to Dependent Children Program,

As program objectives become clarified by experience, and ways of accomplishing them are better understood, it is evident that the needs of families and of children within the family group must be individualized and accorded the differential treatment that their situation require.⁵

A sixth conclusion indicates the importance of the problem of mothers in industry. Almost ten per cent of mothers were in defense industries and this problem will be increasingly difficult unless some controls are created.

The seventh conclusion showed eight fathers to be in the Armed Forces a condition directly affecting each commitment.

An outstanding fact is that only fourteen of the children remained in the State Home and School. The vast majority were placed by the Children's Bureau. It is conclusively indicated that the State Home and School is a temporary home, that it should function as a study home, transferring children to appropriate institutions or preparing them for foster home placement.

⁵ Social Work Year Book 1943 Russell Sage Foundation, New York 1943, p.50

It is clear that a large number of commitments are of children under five who cannot be placed in foster homes or another institution, under the present system, and must therefore remain at the State Home and School.

There is an indication of a need for action in the field of Child Welfare in Rhode Island. The conclusion of the study specifically bear out the general conclusion of the White House Conference of 1940 that in planning for the future "emphasis should be given to equalizing the opportunities available to certain neglected groups of children, including-

Children in families of low income.
 Children in congested city neighborhoods.
 Negro children and children of other minority groups.
 Children with mental, emotional and physical handicaps.⁶

Approved,

Richard K. Conant
 Richard K. Conant, Dean

⁶ White House Conference on Children in a Democracy, Washington, D.C. 1940, Final Report, Part IV, p. 367

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Public Laws of Rhode Island 1942, Ch. 1212, Sec. 1

Part 1.

SCHEDULE

THE FAMILY

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Case Number | 2. Color
White ()
Colored () |
| 3. Date of Commitment | 4. Court |
| 5. Residence of Family | 6. Committing Agency |
| 7. Other Agencies Active | 8. Reasons for Commitment |
| 9. Economic Status of Family
Dependent Moderate
Marginal Affluent
Comfortable | 10. Circumstances Causing Commitment |
| 11. Marital Status of Parents
(a) Unmarried
(b) Married and living together
(c) Marriage intact, parents
not living together
1. Parent in armed forces
2. Parent in institution
3. Parent employed and liv-
ing away from home
4. Other reasons
(d) Divorced
(e) Both parents dead
(f) Father dead
(g) Mother dead
(h) Other | 12. Whereabouts of Child (at time
(commitment))
(a) At Home
(in home of one or both
parents, step parents or
adopted parents).
(b) In home of relatives
(c) Foster family home
1. Boarding home
2. Free or adoptive home
3. Work or wage home
(d) Institution (specify)
(e) Elsewhere |
| 13. Number of Children in Family | 14. Other Institutional Contacts |
| 15. Occupation of Father | 16. Salary of Father |
| 17. Occupation of Mother | 18. Salary of Mother |
| 19. Personality, Habits and Behavior of Father | |
| 20. Personality, Habits and Behavior of Mother | |

Part 2.

SCHEDULE

THE CHILD

1. Age of Child
2. Sex M () F ()
2. I. Q.
4. Grade Placement
5. Child's Behavior and Attitude in School:
6. Child's Behavior in the Community:
7. Child's Relationship to Siblings and Playmates:
8. Child's Relationship and Attitude toward parents:
9. Special Disabilities of Child:
10. Health of Child:
11. Department Disposition of Child:
12. Miscellaneous Comments:

THE CHILD

THE CHILD

1. The Child

1. The Child

2. The Child

2. The Child

3. The Child

4. The Child

5. The Child

6. The Child

7. The Child

8. The Child

9. The Child

10. The Child

**DEPENDENT CHILD.
(PETITION)**

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

PROVIDENCE, SC.

THE JUVENILE COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

To the Honorable the Juvenile Court of the Eighth Judicial District.

Your petitioner..... of.....
in the county of..... and State of Rhode Island, a person
having knowledge, information and belief of the material facts, that appear to warrant this petition,
respectfully represents unto said Court, that at....., in the county of
..... and State of Rhode Island, on the..... day of
....., A. D. 194 ,....., a child of the age of.....
years residing in said..... is a dependent child, and requires the care and
protection of the State, in this:

That at said..... on the..... day of.....,
A. D. 194....., the said child.....
is without a parent or lawful guardian able to adequately provide for the support, training and
education of said child, and is unable to maintain himself by lawful employment.
is supported in a poor-house.
is dependent upon the public for support.

..... the parents of said child for good cause, desire
to be relieved of his care and custody, namely:

THE CHILD

THE CHILD

1. Age of Child

2. Sex of Child

3. Place of Birth

4. I. C.

5. Child's Behavior and Attitude in School

6. Child's Behavior in the Community

7. Child's Relationship to Siblings and Parents

8. Child's Characteristics and Abilities toward School

9. Special Disabilities of Child

10. Health of Child

11. Important Dispositions of Child

12. Miscellaneous Comments

**DEPENDENT CHILD.
(PETITION)**

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

PROVIDENCE, SC.

THE JUVENILE COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

To the Honorable the Juvenile Court of the Eighth Judicial District.

Your petitioner.....of.....
in the county of.....and State of Rhode Island, a person
having knowledge, information and belief of the material facts, that appear to warrant this petition,
respectfully represents unto said Court, that at....., in the county of
.....and State of Rhode Island, on the.....day of
....., A. D. 194 ,....., a child of the age of.....
years residing in said.....is a dependent child, and requires the care and
protection of the State, in this :

That at said.....on the.....day of.....
A. D. 194 , the said child.....
is without a parent or lawful guardian able to adequately provide for the support, training and
education of said child, and is unable to maintain himself by lawful employment.
is supported in a poor-house.
is dependent upon the public for support.

.....the parents of said child for good cause, desire
to be relieved of his care and custody, namely :

That the parents*.....of said child
are.....

residing in.....

Therefore your petitioner humbly prays this Honorable Court to inquire into the alleged depend-
ency of said child, and into the truth of the matters herein contained, in pursuance of the statute in
such cases made and provided; and to make such orders in the premises as to this Honorable Court
may seem meet and proper; and as in duty bound your petitioner will ever pray.

Dated at said Cranston this.....day of....., A. D. 194 .

PROVIDENCE, SC., In Cranston this.....day of....., A. D. 194 ,
personally came....., subscriber to the above
petition and made oath to the truth of the same. Before me,

.....
Justice, Clerk, of the Juvenile Court of the Eighth Judicial District.

*If parents are dead or unknown, insert here guardian, lawful custodian, or the person with
whom the child resides, as the case may be.

No.

DEPENDENT CHILD.

Juvenile Court
of the
Eighth Judicial District

PETITION

in the matter of

.....

where the child is under the age of 18

Juvenile Court of the Juvenile Court of the Eighth Judicial District

Petitioner and made oath to the truth of the same. Before me,

Notary Public in and for the State of Colorado

day of

subscribed to the above

Subscribed at said City and County this

day of

A. D. 1914

and as to duty found that petitioner will ever be

and as to duty found that petitioner will ever be

and as to duty found that petitioner will ever be

in the welfare of his care and custody, namely:

the parents of said child for good cause, desire

is dependent upon the public for support

is supported in a poor home

education of said child and is unable to maintain himself by lawful employment

A. D. 1914

on the

day of

Production of the State in this:

is a dependent child and requires the care and

A. D. 1914

a child of the age of

and State of Rhode Island, on the

day of

respectfully represents unto said Court that in

in the county of

Your petitioner

of

and State of Rhode Island, a person

To the Honorable the Juvenile Court of the Eighth Judicial District

THE JUVENILE COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Respectfully

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

(PETITION)

DEPENDENT CHILD

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

PROVIDENCE, SC.

THE JUVENILE COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT.

To the Sheriffs, Deputy Sheriffs, Town Sergeants, Constables and Probation officers within the State, and to the Superintendent of the State Home and School,.....

WHEREAS, at a session of the Juvenile Court of the Eighth Judicial District held at Cranston, Johnston on this..... day of.....19....., on the petition of..... of said Cranston, Johnston..... filed in said Court alleging that at said Cranston, Johnston, Scituate, Foster on the..... day of.....19.....,

a child of the age of years, residing in said Cranston, Johnston, Scituate, Foster is a dependent, neglected child, and requires the care and protection of the State, upon hearing of said petition and consideration thereof it is found that said..... is a dependent, neglected child and is adjudged to be a dependent, neglected child within the meaning of Chapter 404 of the General Laws, and of the acts in amendment thereof and in addition thereto: and it is ordered and decreed that the custody of said child..... be and hereby is assigned to the State Home and School....., until said child arrives at the age of years, unless said child be sooner released from said school by further order of said Court.

You are therefore hereby commanded to take said child..... and h forthwith convey to said State Home and School....., and deliver to the Superintendent or other officer in charge of said State Home and School.....

And you the said Superintendent or other officer in charge of said State Home and School..... are also required to receive said child into your custody and h safely hold and keep from and after the delivery of said child to you until said child arrives at the age of..... years..... according to the terms of this order or decree, and according to the terms of any other order or decree, that may from time to time be issued by said Court in relation to said child.

WITNESS, LOUIS W. DUNN, Esq., Justice of the Juvenile Court of the Eighth Judicial District, at said Cranston, Johnston, this..... day of..... A. D. 19.....

CLERK.

PROVIDENCE, R. I. A. D. 19

STATE HOME AND SCHOOL.

Received this day into my custody the within named.....
who was delivered to me and by me received pursuant to the directions of the within order.

.....
Superintendent.

ELF 77783

No.

Juvenile Court
of the
Eighth Judicial District

Order
in the matter

